IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 2-9, 13-18 and 23-26 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend claims 1, 12, 21 and 22, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

(A) a photometric unit for receiving object light and converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas; and

(B) a control unit for calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the luminance signals of the plurality of areas converted by said photometric unit, ~~said control unit controlling operation of an illumination device for illuminating an object based on a result of the calculating~~

wherein when a rate that a predetermined luminosity level occupies exceeds a reference point in a pattern of the calculated histogram, said control unit controls an operation of an illumination device on the basis of luminance signals obtained by excluding luminance signals of predetermined luminance levels from the luminance signals.

2.-9. (Canceled)

10. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said apparatus includes an image sensing apparatus.

11. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said apparatus includes a camera.

12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

(A) a photometric unit for receiving object light and converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas; and

(B) a control unit for calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the luminance signals of the plurality of areas converted by said photometric unit, ~~said control unit controlling flash photographing operation based on a result of the calculating,~~

wherein when a rate that a predetermined luminosity level occupies exceeds a reference point in a pattern of the calculated histogram, said control

unit controls a flash photographing operation on the basis of luminance signals obtained by excluding luminance signals of predetermined luminance levels from the luminance signals.

13.-18. (Canceled)

19. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said apparatus includes an image sensing apparatus.

20. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said apparatus includes a camera.

21. (Currently Amended) An illumination device control method comprising:

a step of receiving object light[[,]];

a step of converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas[[,]];

a step of calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the converted luminance signals of the plurality of areas[[,]]; and

a step of controlling ~~operation of an illumination device for illuminating an object based on a result of the calculating~~ an operation of an illumination device on the basis of luminance signals obtained by excluding luminance signals of predetermined luminance levels from the luminance signals when a rate that a predetermined luminosity level occupies exceeds a reference point in a pattern of the calculated histogram.

22. (Currently Amended) A flash photographing method comprising:

a step of receiving object light[[,]];

a step of converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas[[,]];

a step of calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the converted luminance signals of the plurality of areas[[,]]; and

a step of controlling flash photographing operation ~~based on a result of the calculating~~ on the basis of luminance signals obtained by excluding luminance signals of predetermined luminance levels from the luminance signals when a pattern of the calculated histogram indicates that luminance signals concentrate on a

predetermined luminance level to not less than a predetermined degeree.

23.-26. (Canceled)

Please add claims 27-38 as follows:

27. (New) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the histogram is generated on the basis of signal levels of red signal, blue signal and green signal that are obtained by decomposing a sensed image signal.

28. (New) The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the histogram is generated on the basis of signal levels of red signal, blue signal and green signal that are obtained by decomposing a sensed image signal.

29. (New) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the histogram is generated on the basis of signal levels of red signal, blue signal and green signal that are obtained by decomposing a sensed image signal.

30. (New) The apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the histogram is generated on the basis of signal levels of red signal, blue signal and green signal that are obtained by decomposing a sensed image signal.

31. (New) An apparatus comprising:

(A) a photometric unit for receiving object light and converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas; and

(B) a control unit for calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the luminance signals of the plurality of areas converted by said photometric unit,

wherein said control unit selects an area to be valid from the plurality of areas on the basis of a pattern of the histogram and controls an operation of an illumination device on the basis of a signal of the selected area.

32. (New) An apparatus comprising:

(A) a photometric unit for receiving object light and converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas; and

(B) a control unit for calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the luminance signals of the plurality of areas converted by said photometric unit,

wherein said control unit selects an area to be valid from the plurality of areas on the basis of a pattern of the histogram and controls a flash photographing operation on the basis of a signal of the selected area.

33. (New) An apparatus comprising:

(A) a photometric unit for receiving object light and converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas; and

(B) a control unit for calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the luminance signals of the plurality of areas converted by said photometric unit,

wherein said control unit compares a calculation result, which is obtained by subtracting an image signal obtained before a pre-flash operation from an image signal obtained in a pre-flash operation, and a predetermined reference value, selects an area to be detected on the basis of the comparing result, and controls an operation of an illumination device on the basis of a signal of the selected area.

34. (New) An apparatus comprising:

(A) a photometric unit for receiving object light and converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas; and

(B) a control unit for calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the luminance signals of the plurality of areas converted by said photometric unit,

wherein said control unit compares a calculation result, which is obtained by subtracting an image signal obtained before a pre-flash operation from an image signal obtained in a pre-flash operation, and a predetermined reference value, selects an area to be detected on the basis of the comparing result, and controls a flash photographing operation on the basis of a signal of the selected area.

35. (New) An illumination device control method comprising:

a step of receiving object light;

a step of converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas;

a step of calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the converted luminance signals of the plurality of areas;

a step of selecting an area to be valid from the plurality of areas on the basis of a pattern of the histogram; and

a step of controlling an operation of an illumination device on the basis of a signal of the selected area.

36. (New) A flash photographing method comprising:

a step of receiving object light;

a step of converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas;

a step of calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the converted luminance signals of the plurality of areas;

a step of selecting an area to be valid from the plurality of areas on the basis of a pattern of the histogram; and

a step of controlling a flash photographing operation on the basis of a signal of the selected area.

37. (New) An illumination device control method comprising:

a step of receiving object light;

a step of converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas;

a step of calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the converted luminance signals of the plurality of areas;

a step of comparing a calculation result, which is obtained by subtracting an image signal obtained before a pre-flash operation from an image signal obtained in a pre-flash operation, and a predetermined reference value;

a step of selecting an area to be detected on the basis of the comparing result; and

a step of controlling an operation of an illumination device on the basis of a signal of the selected area.

38. (New) A flash photographing method comprising:

a step of receiving object light;

a step of converting the object light into luminance signals of a plurality of areas;

a step of calculating a histogram of a luminance distribution on the basis of the converted luminance signals of the plurality of areas;

a step of comparing a calculation result, which is obtained by subtracting an image signal obtained before a pre-flash operation from an image signal obtained in a pre-flash operation, and a predetermined reference value;

a step of selecting an area to be detected on the basis of the comparing result; and

a step of controlling a flash photographing operation on the basis of a signal of the selected area.